

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06
IO-13 OMB-01 TRSE-00 /075 W
-----106336 031905Z /42

R 031707Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8117
INFO AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MADRID

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 PARIS 07797

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: FR, DA
SUBJ: FRENCH-DANISH CONTRETEMPS OVER INTERFERENCE
IN INTERNAL AFFAIRS

REF: COPENHAGEN 1368

1. ALTHOUGH THE FRENCH-DANISH CONTRETEMPS
OVER PRIME MINISTER JORGENSEN'S REMARKS ON
THE FRENCH ELECTIONS MIGHT HAVE EASILY FADED
AWAY FOLLOWING THE EXCHANGES OF LAST WEEK
(REFTEL), GISCARD EVIDENTLY DECIDED
THAT THERE WAS SOME INTERNAL POLITICAL BENEFIT
TO BE GAINED BY KEEPING THE INCIDENT IN THE
PUBLIC EYE A LITTLE LONGER. FOLLOWING
THE USUAL WEDNESDAY MEETING OF THE CABINET
AT THE ELYSEE, GISCARD'S SPOKESMAN
ANNOUNCED TO THE PRESS MARCH 1 THAT "THE
EXPLANATIONS GIVEN BY THE PRIME MINISTER OF
DENMARK ON HIS DECLARATIONS IN WASHINGTON
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ARE NOT CONSIDERED SATISFACTORY BY THE
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC." ACCORDING TO THE
SPOKESMAN, GISCARD STRESSED DURING THE CABINET
MEETING THAT FOREIGN DECLARATIONS ON THE
INTERNAL FRENCH SITUATION ARE NOT ACCEPTABLE,
AND THAT FRANCE FOR ITS PART RESTRAINS ITSELF
WITH REGARD TO COMMENTS ON OTHER COUNTRIES.

THE SPOKESMAN ADDED THAT FRANCE WAS "MAINTAINING DIPLOMATIC CONTACT" WITH DENMARK ON THIS MATTER.

2. MEANWHILE, MITTERRAND TOLD THE PRESS THAT HE "COULD ONLY BE SATISFIED" WITH JORGENSEN'S REMARKS, WHICH HE FOUND PERFECTLY IN KEEPING WITH INTERNATIONAL USAGE. HE ADDED THAT HE FOUND GISCARD'S REACTION "HIGHLY BIZARRE AND ASTONISHING."

3. FOLLOWING THE ELYSEE'S LATEST STATEMENT, THE DANISH AMBASSADOR, WHO WAS SURPRISED THAT THE FRENCH HAD NOT SIMPLY ALLOWED THE INCIDENT TO DIE QUIETLY, CALLED QUAISECRETARY GENERAL SOUTOU TO ASK FOR AN EXPLANATION, BUT SOUTOU WOULD NOT COMMENT ON THE ELYSEE DECLARATION. THE DANISH EMBASSY IS REFRAINING FROM ANY

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 PARIS 07797

PUBLIC COMMENT, AND HOPING THE POLITICAL LEADERSHIP IN COPENHAGEN WILL DO THE SAME, SO THAT THIS TEMPEST IN A TEAPOT WILL BLOW OVER.

4. COMMENT: GISCARD'S REACTION TO JORGENSEN'S
REMARKS, AND HIS SOMEWHAT SURPRISING REFUSAL TO
LET THE MATTER DIE QUICKLY REFLECTS THE
SENSITIVITY OF THE PRE-ELECTORAL POLITICAL
SITUATION IN FRANCE. GISCARD OBVIOUSLY THOUGHT HE
COULD GAIN POLITICAL ADVANTAGE BY LOUDLY SHOUTING
INTERFERENCE IN INTERNAL AFFAIRS, THEREBY BLUNTING
ACCUSATIONS OF US INTERFERENCE IN INTERNAL AFFAIRS
WHICH WERE HEATEDLY MADE BY THE LEFT HERE AT THE
TIME OF THE ADMINISTRATION'S DECLARATION ON ITALY.
GISCARD CAME OFF BADLY WHEN THE QUAI PRONOUNCED
THE US STATEMENT NORMAL, AND HE IS TRYING TO
BALANCE THAT INCIDENT. IN ADDITION, HOWEVER, HE
IS PROBABLY WARNING OTHER EUROPEAN
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SOCIALIST LEADERS NOT TO MAKE
STATEMENTS IN SUPPORT OF MITTERRAND DURING THE
FINAL DAYS OF THIS ELECTION CAMPAIGN. IF
THIS IS A PART OF HIS PURPOSE, HE MAY HAVE
SUCCESSFULLY BROUGHT HOME HIS POINT. THE LESSON
IN ALL THIS--WHICH WE SHOULD FOLLOW METICULOUSLY--
IS THAT ANY HINT OF INTERFERENCE IN FRENCH POLITICS
BETWEEN NOW AND THE SETTLING-IN OF A NEW (OR
RENEWED) GOF, WILL BE VERY UNWELCOME HERE.
END COMMENT.
HARTMAN

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